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the University of Oregon as professor of geology.

GEORGE W. MUSGRAVE has resigned his position in the Bureau of Soils, United States Department of Agriculture, to become assistant professor of agronomy at Rutgers College.

DR. R. KUDO, formerly in charge of the department of protozoology of the Imperial Sericultural Experiment Station of Japan, and last year temporary assistant at the Rockefeller Institute in New York City, has been appointed instructor in zoology at the University of Illinois.

MRS. HELEN B. OWENS has been appointed instructor in mathematics at Cornell University.

JOSEPH WARREN PHELAN has been appointed lecturer on industrial chemistry at Harvard University. Harlan True Stetson has been appointed instructor in astronomy in the same institution.

## DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

### THE SCIENTIFIC NAME OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON

THE technical name of the passenger pigeon has for many years been *Ectopistes migratorius* (Linnæus) (= *Columba migratoria* Linnæus, "Syst. Nat.," ed. 12, I., 1766, p. 285). There is, however, another name, *Columba canadensis* Linnæus ("Syst. Nat.," ed. 12, I., 1766, p. 284), based on the *Turtur canadensis* of Brisson ("Ornith.," I., 1760, p. 118), that needs consideration. Reference to Brisson shows conclusively that his detailed description is that of the female passenger pigeon, as he mentions particularly the rufescent tail-spots. Both *Columba canadensis* Linnæus and *Columba migratoria* Linnæus are of equal pertinence, and there seems to be no reason for the rejection of the former, since both the International and the American Ornithologists' Union codes of nomenclature provide definitely for the enforcement of the principle of anteriority (page precedence) in such cases. We should, therefore, hereafter call the passenger pigeon *Ectopistes canadensis* (Linnæus).

HARRY C. OBERHOLSER

### ALLEGED REDISCOVERY OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON

STATEMENT BY JOHN M. CLARKE, DIRECTOR .  
NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM

The enclosed letter from Mr. M. Rasmussen, of Amsterdam, N. Y., is in reply to an inquiry from me regarding a statement of his discovery which Mr. Rasmussen had left with one of my associates at the State Museum.

I have had a personal interview with Mr. Rasmussen since the date of the enclosed letter, in which he tells me that he has been a student and observer of birds for twenty-five years; that he had with him on this date, October 1, Mr. C. O. Wilson and Mr. William Sanders, of Amsterdam, both students, and that they were together for a bird study trip through the country in the vicinity of West Galway and Charlton, N. Y.

56 GLEN AVE.,  
AMSTERDAM, N. Y., October, 5, 1918.

DR. JOHN M. CLARKE,  
Director, State Museum,  
Albany, N. Y.

Dear Sir: Answering your letter of yesterday: Yes I am absolutely sure that the birds were passenger pigeons and not the mourning dove. I could not have made this positive observation by seeing the flock, because we did not get close enough to make sure, but some were in a buckwheat field on the opposite side of the road from the field where we raised the flock, and because we knew, by seeing the flock and by the whistling sound of their wings, that we had seen wild pigeons we took precaution to get as close to them as possible. Two of us were fortunate enough to have a bird light on a low limb of a tree only a few feet in front of us, as we were standing still under cover in the edge of the woodlot, while my dog was raising the birds in the field. We were so close that we could see the orange-red skin about the eyes, and the bluish color of the back and the head with no black spot near the ear region; also the large size of the bird convinced us that we had a passenger pigeon before us, and that we had seen a small flock of them a few minutes before.

The mourning dove is not so rare a bird to me. I have seen small flocks of them from time to time during the twenty-five years I have lived in this state.

I never but once before saw wild passenger